

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action dated August 4th, 2004, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration based on the following remarks and amendments. Applicant respectfully submits that the claims as presented are in condition for allowance.

Claims 1 through 30 are pending in this application. The Office Action Summary indicates claims 25 through 30 have been subject to a restriction requirement and have been withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1 through 6, 8 through 11, 13 through 22, and 23 have been amended. Applicants' undersigned representative respectfully requests entry of new claims 31 and 32. No new matter has been added.

Claim 21 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 ¶ 2 as allegedly being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claims 1 through 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application 2002/0038357 (Haverstock et al.), in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,314,425 (Serbinis et al.). Claims 20, and 22-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Haverstock et al., in view of Serbinis et al., and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,555,375 (Sudama et al.).

35 U.S.C. § 112 ¶ 2 Rejection

Claim 21 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 ¶ 2 as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Specifically, the Examiner to language in claim 21 as being ambiguous, and to the term "state" lacking proper antecedent basis.

Applicant's undersigned representative has amended claim 21 to correct the ambiguity of the claim and the antecedent basis. It is respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection and allow claim 21.

The Prior Art Rejections

Applicants' have noted

[a] particularly important operation in workflow systems is managing access to documents as they move through various stages of a workflow. In a typical document-publishing scenario, significant time can elapse between creation of a document and final approval of the document for external

viewing or publishing. For example, after an author revises an existing document and enters the revised document into a publishing workflow, several editors may need to review the document prior to the document receiving final approval for viewing by people outside the publishing group. It may take an extended period before the editors have an opportunity to review the document. In the meantime, it is necessary to restrict access to the revised document until it receives final approval. Indeed, it is necessary to restrict access to the document even if the editing process takes only short time. **Editors should be given access to the new version of the document for purposes of editing and approving the document while those without approval authority should be given access to the original version of the document without revisions. Thus, it can be said that the original or “base” document and the revised document should be maintained separately, or “isolated” from each other and access given as appropriate to one or the other during the period that the document is undergoing approval in the publishing workflow.**

Applicants' have disclosed systems and methods to provide such functionality. According to an aspect of the disclosed systems and methods,

when a revision is made to an original or “base” document and the revision placed in a workflow, a separate “working” copy of the base document is generated. As the document moves through the workflow, new versions of the “working” copy document may also be generated. Security controls, which define who may access the base document as well as any versions of the working copy document, are defined and stored in relation to the documents. The security controls further define the types of actions users may take with respect to the document. For example, **the security controls may specify that a user should be given access to the working copy document as opposed to the base document** and should have the capability to check-out the working copy of the document for revision.

Accordingly, Applicants' claim 1 as amended is directed to a computer-implemented method for controlling access to documents during a workflow, comprising:

upon entry of a base document into a workflow,
creating a workflow working copy of the base document;

selectively providing a user access to the base document depending upon the identity of a user;
selectively providing a user access to the workflow working copy of the base document depending upon the identity of a user; and
if a user is provided access to the workflow working copy of the base document, selectively providing access to perform operations on the workflow working copy of the base document depending upon the identity of a user.

Claim 13 as amended is directed to a system for providing document isolation in a workflow environment, comprising:

a processor, wherein said processor is operable to execute instructions for performing the following acts:
maintaining for a base document undergoing a publishing workflow, a workflow copy of the base document;
maintaining access control data in relation to the base document and the workflow copy of the base document;
upon receipt of a request to access the base document, selectively determining based on the access control data to provide access to the base document; and
upon receipt of a request to access the base document, selectively determining based on the access control data to provide access to the workflow copy of the base document.

In order for a reference or set of references to render these claims obvious, the reference must disclose each of the claimed elements, including those emphasized, and suggest the claimed combination. More particularly, the references must teach **upon entry of a document into a workflow creating a workflow working copy of the base document, selectively providing a user access to the base document depending upon the identity of a user, and selectively providing a user access to the workflow working copy of the base document depending upon the identity of a user.** Applicant's undersigned representative respectfully submits that none of the references even teach the emphasized limitations, and cannot possibly suggest their combination with the other claimed elements.

The Prior Art Does Not Anticipate Or Render The Claims Obvious

The Examiner alleges that claims 1 through 19 are obvious over Haverstock et al. in view of Serbinis et al.

Haverstock et al. allege to disclose a system for enabling access to non-HTML files from a Web browser. (Abstract). When a system user requests a non-HTML file from a database using a Web browser, the Web browser transmits the request to a server via an HTTP server and module. (Abstract). The server locates the requested document, retrieves it, and translates the document into a format supported by the Web browser. (Abstract). The translated document is then communicated to the Web browser. (Abstract). Haverstock et al. further disclose restricting access to fields and employs the concept of roles in doing so. (¶¶ 57, 65.) For example, a user with the “depositor” role can write to a database. (paragraph 68.) A user with the “reader” role has read-only access to pages on the Web site. (paragraph 69.) An “author” can create and post new pages to the Web site. (paragraph 70.)

Serbinis et al. alleges to disclose internet-based document management systems and methods wherein access to a system is controlled through the use of access tokens (Abstract). An internet accessible document management system allows electronic documents to be stored and accessed using a browser, downloaded for review, and then returned to the server for access by other users (Abstract). The server is programmed to generate and validate access tokens and provide services to users based on the validated access tokens (Abstract).

The claims have been amended to clarify the that working copy of the base document is a workflow working document. **Upon entry of a document into a workflow, a workflow copy of the base document is created.** The purpose of the workflow working copy of the base document is to allow select users to make changes to the workflow working copy of the base document, while other users are still provided access to the original document. Newly added claims 25 and 26 clarify that once the workflow working document changes are completed or the workflow working document is otherwise approved, the workflow is complete and the workflow working document replaces the base document for the users.

Neither Haverstock or Serbinis et al. teach **upon entry of a document into a workflow creating a workflow working copy of the base document**, selectively providing a user access to the base document depending upon the identity of a user, and selectively providing a user access to the workflow working copy of the base document depending upon the identity of a user. The Examiner cites col. 11, lines 7-16 of Serbinis et al. as teaching upon entry of a document into a workflow making a copy of the base document and to enable user access to the working copy of the base document depending on user

authorization (Office Action, page 4). To the contrary, the cited portion of Serbinas does not teach **upon entry of a document into a workflow, creating a workflow working copy of the base document**, and selectively providing a user access to the workflow working copy of the base document depending upon the identity of a user. In the portion of Serbinas et al. cited by the examiner, a user can “check out” a document depending on the user’s rights as specified by an originator of the document. Even if “checking out” a document can be considered the same as creating a workflow working copy of a base document, which it can’t, the working copy of the document is necessarily created when the user “checks it out” and not created when entering the workflow as required by the claims. Accordingly, Applicant’s undersigned representative respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 20 is Non-Obvious

Claim 20 as amended is directed to a method for controlling access to operations that may be performed on a document, comprising:

upon creation of a workflow, creating a workflow copy of a base document;

receiving a request to create a new operation that may be performed on the workflow copy of the base document;

assigning a unique identifier to the new operation;
updating an access control list to include an entry for the unique identifier for the new operation; and
updating the access control list to include an entry identifying the roles that have access to the new operation.

In order for the set of references to render claim 20 obvious, the references must teach all of the claimed elements and must also teach combining the elements in the claimed combination. Applicants’ undersigned representative respectfully submits that the cited references do not even teach all of the claim limitations, and cannot possibly suggest combining the limitations as required by claim 20. Accordingly, it is not possible that the cited references render claim 20 obvious.

Sudama et al. teaches assigning operation identifiers to objects and group objects that are created during the decomposition of the original object. (Col. 8, ll. 55-57.) These

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identifiers are used to facilitate the return of status information to the parent object. (Col. 8, ll. 61-63.)

Neither Haverstock et al., Serbinis et al., nor Sudama et al. teach **upon creation of a workflow, creating a workflow copy of a base document, and receiving a request to create a new operation that may be performed on the workflow copy of the base document** as required by the claims. The Examiner states that Serbinis et al. teaches "to make a copy of the base document and to grant user access to the working copy of the base document depending on the user authorization upon creation of the workflow." (Office Action, page 12.). To the contrary, the cited portion of Serbinis et al., make no mention whatsoever about a workflow, or the creating a workflow copy of a base document upon entry to the workflow as required by the claims. It is therefore respectfully requested that the Examiner withdraw rejection and allow the claims.

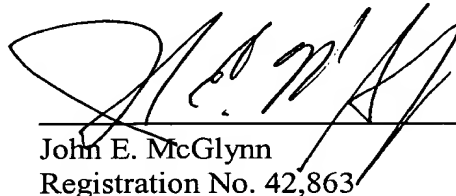
New Claims 31 and 32

Applicant's undersigned representative respectfully submits new claims 31 and 32 patentably define over the cited references.

Conclusion

For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicant's undersigned representative respectfully requests reconsideration of the outstanding office action and issuance of a Notice of Allowance.

Date: 10/27/04



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